Sale of opium in the grey market

4324. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether opium farmers of U.P. and Rajasthan are selling opium in the grey market at exorbitant rates;

(b) if so, whether any enquiries have been made on the diversion of the produce; and

(c) the action taken against those involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Cases of opium seizure have been detected in which some licenced opium poppy cultivators have been found to be engaged in diversion of licit opium.

(b) and (c) Thorough investigations are conducted in all cases where opium poppy cultivators are found to be involved in the diversion of licit opium. Such cultivators are not only debarred from licence but prosecution is also launched against them under the provisions of the Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985. Embezzlement/diversion of opium by the opium poppy cultivators is punishable under the NDPS Act with imprisonment and fine.

Resumption of aids by Japan

4325. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a freeze on fresh aid on new projects in India and yen loans was made effective by Japan during 1998-99;

(b) whether a Japanese delegation to resume aid came to India during March, 2002; and

(c) if so, the details of the decisions taken at the meet?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) the Government of Japan and the Government of India through mutual consultations have identified economic infrastructure, environmental protection